

WASHINGTON - U.S. Rep. Harry Mitchell released the following statement regarding the Department of Veteran's Affairs (VA) efforts to issue emergency checks to students awaiting late GI Bill benefits at the Phoenix Regional Office.

"It is unfortunate that thousands of veterans in Arizona and around the nation have been forced to travel to the VA regional offices to receive some of their benefits that are already overdue.

"While I am glad that many veterans waiting for their benefits will have access to these emergency checks, I am still concerned about the VA's failure to meet its responsibilities to our veterans on time. There is going to be a Congressional hearing and I want to see an accounting from the VA about the problems it is encountering and its plans to prevent them again in the future.

"I will continue to press the VA to ensure that all of our veterans receive all of the GI Bill benefits they have earned. The education that our veterans have been promised must not be delayed, not by a single semester."